Water Pollution

1365. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the C&AG, in its recent report, has revealed shortcomings in implementation of Water (Prevention & Control of Pollution) Act, 1974;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether water pollution in the country is increasing and various agencies have totally failed to check such trend; and

(d) if so, the concrete steps Government propose to take to enforce the Act, effectively?

THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) and (b) The Comptroller and Auditor General's Report indicated gaps in implementation of programmes relating to pollution prevention, control and abatement of water pollution and performance of Pollution Control Boards.

(c) and (d) The Pollution Control Boards have been able to control pollution through various preventive, promotional and mitigative measures. The initiatives taken by the Pollution Control Boards have resulted in reduction of pollution from different sources. The steps taken to check water pollution and to enforce the Water (Prevention and Control of Pollution) Act, 1974 effectively include the following:—

(i) Technical and financial support has been provided for strengthening of Pollution Control Boards (PCBs) and Pollution Control Committees (PCCs).

(ii) Periodic interaction meetings are held with the personnel at various levels of the Pollution Control Boards (PCBs) and Pollution Control Committees (PCCs).

(iii) State Governments have been advised to induct professionals in the Pollution Control Boards and Pollution Control Committees.

(iv) State Governments have been advised to lift the ban on recruitment of scientific and technical personnel for the Pollution Control Boards.

(v) Guidelines have been framed for streamlining the procedure for issuance of consent and authorization by the Pollution Control Boards.

(vi) Minimal National Standards for control of pollution from various sources have been laid down by the Central Pollution Control Board for implementation through the concerned State Pollution Control Boards.

(vii) Effluent standards have been notified for 71 different categories of industries.

(viii) Water quality at 507 monitoring stations carried out by State Pollution Control Board have been reviewed and data used for executing programmes on abatement of pollution in rivers and lakes.

(ix) The Ganga Action Plan and National River Conservation Plan have been launched on the basis of survey of water quality and river basin surveys conducted by CPCB and SPCBs.

(x) For ground water protection, the Central Ground Water Authority has been set up.

(xi) For coastal water, with the support of Ocean Development, a national programme has been taken along with concerned SPCBs.

(xii) Central/Pollution Control Board (CPCB) directed the State Pollution Control Boards/Pollution control committees for identification of grossly polluting industries discharging their effluents directly into the rivers and for taking action against those which have not provided the requisite Effluent Treatment Plants (ETPs).

(xiii) Financial assistance is provided for installation of Common Effluent Treatment Plants (CETPs) in cluster of small-scale industries.

Poaching of Wildlife

1366. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Prime Minister while addressing the 21st meeting of the Indian Board for Wildlife at New Delhi in January, 2002, expressed concern over the poaching of tigers and leopards during the last few years;

(b) if so, the total number of tigers and leopards poached and killed due to unnatural circumstances, during the last five years;

(c) whether poaching of such animals is posing threat to the wildlife in the country; and